translated, sentence after sentence, into Ossetian. It was impossible to determine whether the elders were impressed or not. Their faces seemed to be carved out of stone.

Others spoke in the same noncommittal way as the first old man, repeating that they wished their neighbors to trust them and be their friends. But, above all, they needed flour, sugar, and gunpowder. As long as there was plenty of traffic on the highway, they had everything in abundance. Why then did the Georgians and Russians close the road?

One of the Georgian delegates pointed out that traffic had stopped because of frequent holdups. The Ossetian delegates disagreed. "When there is enough traffic, there is enough money in our land," they said. "Everybody is happy. No robbery. When traffic stops, there is no money. People starve. Then they take what the Almighty sends them."

The convention was futile. The Ossets had no intention of reaching an agreement with Georgia. They only wished to show the Georgians how sensible they were. They aired their grievances but pressed no particular point.

In comparison with Ossetia, the Georgian Republic was the big brother. Yet the Georgians played the game with patience, as the Homeric setting demanded.

Before dusk the convention broke up. A Georgian spokesman had finished his speech. The Ossets sat silent. Then the elders began to stand up, bowed to the Georgian delegation, and went to their horses.

We walked to our cars. As the cars proceeded southward, our convoy fell in gradually behind us, two horsemen at a time.

RUSSIA'S LAST HOPE OF DEMOCRACY IS CRUSHED

In August, 1918, the Volunteers appeared at Tuapse and, moving along the Black Sea, reached the Georgian border where they met troops of that republic. There were about three thousand men on each side. A dispute about the border district, an area with a population of some two hundred thousand, where the native population had decided to join Georgia against the protest of Russian landowners, supplied the Volunteers a pretext for attacking the Georgian troops. The main force of the Volunteers, however, was tied up in the north. The Volunteers and the Georgians continued to face each other until the end of the year. In January, 1919, the Volunteer Army launched an offensive. In April, the Georgians counterattacked. The struggle went on, with vacillating success. Thus Georgia found herself in open war